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COORDINATION QUESTIONS:
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
DECLARATION ON THE
GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE
TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES
AND PEOPLES BY THE
SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND
THE INTERNATIONAL
INSTITUTIONS ASSOCIATED
WITH THE UNITED NATIONS

Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 43/178 of 20 December 1988, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to charge the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) with the supervision of the development of the programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people and to report to the Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in implementing the resolution. Pursuant to the resolution, the Secretary-General submitted a report on assistance to the Palestinian people (A/46/204-E/1991/80 and Add.2) to the Assembly at its forty-sixth session.

2. Following its consideration of the report of the Secretary-General, the General Assembly adopted resolution 46/201 of 20 December 1991 on assistance to the Palestinian people, in which it, inter alia, took note of the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to the Palestinian people; expressed its appreciation to the States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations that had provided assistance to the Palestinian people; requested the international community, the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to sustain and increase their assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), taking into account the economic losses of the Palestinian people as a result of the Persian Gulf crisis; called for treatment on a transit basis of Palestinian exports and imports passing through neighbouring ports and points of exit and entry; also called for the granting of trade concessions and concrete preferential measures for Palestinian exports on the basis of Palestinian certificates of origin; further called for the immediate lifting of Israeli restrictions and obstacles hindering the implementation of assistance projects by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), other United Nations bodies and others providing economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory; reiterated its call for the implementation of development projects in the occupied Palestinian territory, including the projects mentioned in its resolution 39/233 of 18 December 1984; called for facilitation of the establishment of Palestinian development banks in the occupied Palestinian territory, with a view to promoting investment, production, employment and income therein; and requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its forty-seventh session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution.

3. On behalf of the Secretary-General, the Executive Director of UNCHS (Habitat) wrote to the various concerned sources requesting information on the implementation of the above-mentioned resolution. Given below are the summaries of the replies received.

4. Any additional information received will be issued as an addendum to the present report.

II. REPLIES FROM THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

A. United Nations

1. Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs

5. At its thirty-sixth session, held at Vienna from 11 to 20 March 1992, the Commission on the Status of Women adopted draft resolution E/CN.6/1992/L.6, which, inter alia, requested the Secretary-General to review developments in the situation of Palestinian women and children in the occupied Palestinian territory and in the refugee camps, and to submit a report to the Commission at its thirty-seventh session using all available sources. The Division for the Advancement of Women will be responsible for the preparation of that report and its submission to the forthcoming session of the Commission.

2. United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

6. UNCHS (Habitat) prepared and submitted to the thirteenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements a report entitled "Housing requirements of the Palestinian people" (HS/C/13/2/Add.1). The report was prepared pursuant to Commission resolution 12/1, which had requested the Executive Director of UNCHS (Habitat) "to devise a national housing development strategy to the year 2000 for the Palestinian people based on the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000 in cooperation with the PLO, including the housing requirements of a future independent Palestinian State". After its consideration of the report the Commission adopted resolution 13/6, in which it took note of the report "with satisfaction" and requested "the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Executive Director and in cooperation with the PLO, to devise a plan for the implementation of a shelter strategy for the Palestinian people to the year 2000, as contained in the report of the Executive Director on the housing requirements of the Palestinian people, together with the provision of necessary funds". The Executive Director is presently in the process of preparing that report, on behalf of the Secretary-General, for submission to the fourteenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements, which will be held at Nairobi from 26 April to 5 May 1993.

7. UNCHS (Habitat) is also in the process of taking appropriate action with a view to preparing, on behalf of the Secretary-General, a report on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory for submission to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, through the Economic and Social Council. The report is being prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 46/162 of 19 December 1991, which requested the Secretary-General "to consider ways and means of improving the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory and, pending the exercise of their right to self-determination, to plan for concerted economic and social actions by the United Nations system".

3. United Nations Children's Fund

Introduction

8. Since 1980, UNICEF has supported programmes for Palestinian children and women in Jordan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Lebanon and the West Bank and Gaza. The programmes supported in close collaboration with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) and relevant United Nations agencies include: health; pre-school and primary education; women's programmes; water supply and sanitation; and a physiotherapy programme for the West Bank and Gaza Strip following the intifadah. The major objective of UNICEF assistance was to reduce infant mortality and morbidity through improvement of primary health care; immunization; health education; control of diarrhoeal diseases and acute respiratory infection; promotion of safe delivery practices and provision of safe drinking-water and sanitation. Following the crisis in the Persian Gulf a special effort was made to sustain these programmes. Over the period from 1980 to 1991, total UNICEF support for Palestinians increased from US$ 212,278 in 1980 to $957,276 in 1985, and $1,773,863 in 1991.

9. The UNICEF Executive Board passed resolution 1991/15 requesting the Executive Director of UNICEF "to continue to urgently assess the situation of Palestinian children and women and to provide funds commensurate with the expanding needs of these children and women and to report to the 1992 session of the Executive Board on implementation". As a result, the total sum of funds approved for Palestinians had increased from $1,773,863 in 1991 to $3,234,400 in 1992. Of the latter, $1,734,400 is dependent on supplementary funding being made available by donors.

Palestinians in Jordan

10. UNICEF cooperation with UNRWA in giving support to immunization activities, control of diarrhoeal disease and acute respiratory infection contributed considerably in reducing infant mortality rate from 59 to 35 per 1,000 live births during the period from 1980 to 1990. Immunization coverage levels for DPT3 (diphtheria-pertussis-tetanus) and OPV3 (oral polio vaccine) were increased from 30 per cent in 1980 to 99 per cent. During the same period, mortality due to diarrhoeal diseases was reduced from more than 3,000 to just 100 per year. Other programmes supported by UNICEF included income-generating activities and basic health education for mothers.

11. A new programme of cooperation for the period 1990-1994 approved by the Executive Board in 1990 aims to sustain the gains made in the fields of immunization, control of diarrhoeal diseases and acute respiratory infection. It also places increased emphasis on promoting safe motherhood in order to reduce birth defects. Two new programmes initiated are the early childhood development programme, which involves both kindergarten teachers and parents in effective stimulation of young children, and an action-oriented health project in which teachers are trained to pass vital information to children.

12. The type of assistance provided is provision of vaccines and syringes and the cold chain equipment programme; provision of oral rehydration salts; training of 100 UNRWA medical and paramedical staff in primary health care, safe motherhood and early detection of disabilities, and nutrition education for mothers; a comprehensive health education programme for women; support for a survey on child morbidity; and a media campaign on disability prevention.

13. Following the Gulf Crisis, most of the 350,000 Jordanian returnees from the Gulf were Palestinians. The sudden loss in remittances that their return entailed sent thousands of Palestinian families into instant poverty. Thus, in 1991, UNICEF cooperation with UNRWA and relevant non-governmental organizations in the field of health, education and early childhood development was stepped up.

14. In addition to the continued supply of sufficient vaccines, syringes and oral rehydration salts to meet the entire needs of the UNRWA expanded programme of immunization and the programme for the control of diarrhoeal diseases, paediatric antibiotic syrups for control of acute respiratory infection and essential drugs were provided. Support was given to Palestinian non-governmental organizations to expand health education for women. The manual "Your Child and Its Health" was distributed widely and incorporated into the curriculum of women's literacy and vocational training courses. UNICEF provided specialized testing equipment to the Disability Detection and Rehabilitation Centre in Bekaa camp and trained staff at the Centre to train mothers on early detection of disability. Support was also given for training 126 UNRWA medical and paramedical staff and 40 Palestinian traditional birth attendants on a range of basic health issues. Twenty Palestinian mothers selected from literacy classes were trained to be trainers in early childhood development. They in turn organized talks and discussions for mothers on the importance of early child development. Thirty-five Palestinian kindergarten teachers were trained to make use of the newly developed standardized kindergarten teaching manual. A total of 35 Palestinian early child specialists received training as part of the Jordan's community outreach programme. Learning materials and equipment were provided to 35 UNRWA and non-governmental kindergartens to create a more stimulating learning environment.

Palestinians in the Syrian Arab Republic

15. In collaboration with UNRWA, UNICEF has contributed to child survival. Partly as the result of universal child immunization being attained several years ahead of the 1990 target, the majority of mothers being made aware through an effective community education campaign on how to prevent dehydration during diarrhoeal diseases, provision of safe water supply and sewage network for 7,000 people and an increased quantity of water supply to an additional 6,000 people in eight camps, infant mortality was reduced from 41 to 33 per 1,000 live births during the period from 1984 to 1990. UNICEF, in collaboration with the General Organization of Palestinian Arab Refugees, the Syrian government agency responsible for Palestinians, has also provided educational materials, basic equipment, furniture and kindergarten teacher training in refugee camps.

16. In 1991 the Executive Board approved a new programme of assistance in the amount of $1.6 million for the period from 1991 to 1994. The programme includes: (a) health (immunization, control of diarrhoeal diseases and acute respiratory infections); (b) women's development programme (which aims to reduce female illiteracy from 25 to 15 per cent, increase women's share in the labour force from 11 to 25 per cent and reduce neonatal and maternal mortality and morbidity by 25 per cent by 1994; and (c) early childhood development (to early childhood stimulation).

17. Given the hardship experienced by the Palestinian community as a result of the Crisis in the Persian Gulf, UNICEF-supported activities in 1991 focused particularly on the health programme. UNICEF continued to provide UNRWA with vaccines, syringes, cold chain equipment and oral rehydration salts. Social mobilization activities for both fields were integrated with national awareness-raising efforts. The acute respiratory infection control programme included development of recording and monitoring systems, medial promotion on prevention treatment and distribution of health education materials. UNICEF and UNFPA collaborated in training Palestinian traditional birth attendants.

18. The early childhood activities focused on improving teaching-learning materials, training kindergarten teachers and upgrading the quality of care in kindergartens. Increased attention is now being placed on early childhood development in the home.

19. Women's development activities concentrated on training of literacy instructors and programme supervision and on collaboration with Palestinian institutes providing women's income-generating activities. While overall market analysis has been undertaken to identify potential new fields of activities, toys and games were produced for use in kindergartens.

20. As UNICEF continues to work closely with UNRWA, increased attention is being given to fostering community action and to exploring more fully the potential of the extensive network of non-governmental organizations and other grassroots organizations in the Palestinian community.

Palestinians in Lebanon

21. In the past, UNICEF cooperated with international and Palestinian associates in training traditional birth attendants and nurses, and in promoting safe motherhood, diarrhoeal disease control, breast-feeding and personal hygiene. UNICEF channelled its assistance for immunization through UNRWA and also directly provided other health supplies, essential drugs and oral rehydration salts.

22. In the field of early childhood development, in cooperation with Palestinian organizations, UNICEF assisted the establishment of 22 modest child-care centres and helped to rehabilitate 24 others, bringing the total to 83 centres serving 7,760 children.

23. In a country where during the 15 years of civil war violence and destruction have become a way of life, the UNICEF-sponsored education for peace programme has been an important effort and continues to attract a large number of Palestinian children. During the summer of 1989 and again in 1990, 2,000 Palestinian children were brought together with Lebanese children in a summer camp so as to learn peaceful living. In the women's development programme, both collective and individual self-support income-generating projects continue to be supported.

24. Another focus of UNICEF support has been the rebuilding of war-damaged water and sanitation infrastructure in the Palestinian refugees camps. The activities included drilling, connecting new wells, rehabilitating old ones, providing water tanks and pipe connections, and provision of generators to 22 UNRWA schools. A sewage system was also installed in one camp.

25. The new five-year programme of assistance for the period 1992-1996 has been prepared for submission to the Executive Board in 1992 to continue to strengthen UNICEF activities in the main fields outlined above. As a programme review has indicated that facilities and services for Palestinians in centres for displaced persons are of a much lower level than those available for the camp population, the underserved centres will receive special attention during the new programme cycle. Another major priority will be development of more reliable baseline data and the situation of Palestinian women and children in Lebanon.

West Bank and Gaza

26. UNICEF began its programme of cooperation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1980 following the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 33/112 B of 18 December 1978, which called on United Nations agencies to provide humanitarian support to the Palestinian people.

27. During the 1980s, UNICEF, in cooperation with UNRWA, helped achieve and sustain universal child immunization and promote oral rehydration salts. UNICEF provided UNRWA with vaccines, syringes and cold chain supplies and contributed to the high expanded programme of immunization coverage among the registered refugee population. The use of oral rehydration salts and oral rehydration therapy has been promoted consistently. Village health workers, traditional birth attendants and supervisors have been trained. In the area of eary childhood development, prototype child development centres for the early detection and rehabilitation of childhood disabilities were established; kindergarten teachers were trained; and sanitation facilities and basic furniture were provided. The relatively limited water supply project focused on the protection of rain-fed shallow wells in 25 villages. The joint UNRWA/UNICEF emergency physiotherapy programme has continued to evolve, with five centres now operating in Gaza and two in the West Bank. Since 1988, 4,500 patients have received physiotherapy rehabilitation for physical injuries.

28. In the field of education, UNICEF also cooperated with UNRWA in two projects aiming to respond to the acute problem of declining achievement levels of children in primary schools. A project to develop proper classroom diagnostic testing and an associated remedial education programme was initiated, together with a project to develop distance learning techniques and materials.

29. In response to resolution 1991/15, passed in April 1991 by the UNICEF Executive Board, the level of UNICEF presence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip was upgraded with the appointment of a resident international project officer. UNICEF's sub-office was moved from Ramallah to Jerusalem, with administrative support provided by UNDP.

30. The first comprehensive situation analysis of the status of Palestinian children in the West Bank and Gaza Strip has been prepared. The report includes assessment of the effects of the crisis in the Persian Gulf on children in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Highlights include dramatic economic decline, health services at risk, problems of educational achievement due to prolonged school closures, and concerns over the psychosocial health of Palestinian children.

31. Based on this analysis, UNICEF is submitting a three-year programme (1992-1994) to the Executive Board at its 1992 session, which delineates action in child health, education and programme for childhood disability and rehabilitation.

4. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

32. Within the scope of its work programme, the UNCTAD secretariat has intensified its activities of assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory (West Bank and Gaza Strip). These have included the following activities.

33. A report entitled "Recent economic developments in the occupied Palestinian territory" (TD/B/1305) was prepared. This document constitutes the seventh annual report prepared by the UNCTAD secretariat, for consideration by the Trade and Development Board at its 38th session (first part). The report discusses the policy environment affecting the Palestinian economy since 1990 in the light of prevailing constraints amidst new pressures, including the impact of the Middle East crisis, Israeli measures and Palestinian initiatives. This is followed by an examination of aggregate economic indicators (GDP, GNP, savings, investment and consumptions); population, labour force and employment; and performance in selected sectors (including agriculture, industry and external trade, as well as tourism and the monetary and fiscal situation). The report also highlights elements of a programme for the immediate revival of the Palestinian economy and briefly reviews progress in the work of the Special Economic Unit (Palestinian people) at the UNCTAD secretariat.

34. During the period under review, the work of the Special Economic Unit continued to focus on the preparation of the intersectoral project on prospects for sustained economic and social development in the occupied Palestinian territory. This included initiating, reviewing and revising the 25 sectoral studies being prepared by experts in the occupied Palestinian territory, with work so far concentrating on the first part of each of these studies, covering the current situation and immediate needs in each of the areas under investigation. This part of the studies is now completed.

35. In order to guide work on the second part of each of the 25 individual studies, dealing with future prospects of the Palestinian economy, a technical study is nearing completion at the UNCTAD secretariat. The study provides an in-depth technical/quantitative framework for future prospects, to guide experts in the preparation of the second and third parts of the individual studies. It concentrates on alternative strategies and policy options to be consolidated and integrated under the respective parts of the intersectoral project. This should include the frame of a programme of action aimed at supporting the efforts of the Palestinian people in setting their economy on the path of sustained growth and development. The intersectoral project is now scheduled to be completed by the second half of 1992.

36. As part of the requirements for the parametric exercise in connection with the above-mentioned quantitative framework, work on the development of the UNCTAD secretariat's database on the Palestinian economy was further intensified. Statistical series, covering national income, population, labour and employment, balance of payments and external trade, were compiled, standardized and classified along the lines of the economic time series in use at the UNCTAD secretariat and stored in the computer facilities of the secretariat for future reference.

37. In addition to the above-mentioned report (TD/B/1305), the following publications were produced during the period under review and may be obtained from the Special Economic Unit at UNCTAD:

(a) "Select bibliography on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory (West Bank and Gaza Strip)" (UNCTAD/RDP/SEU/5, Arabic and English only). This document contains a select bibliography of some 800 references issued in Arabic and English on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory, including books, articles, monographs and United Nations documents. References are presented in two parts, covering those in Arabic and those in English, while in each part the references are grouped first according to the subject classification adopted by the United Nations Bibliographical Information Systems (UNBIS) and subsequently according to alphabetical sequence of authors.

(b) "Selected national accounts series of the occupied Palestinian territory (West Bank and Gaza Strip), 1968-1987" (UNCTAD/RDP/SEU/6, English only). It deals with the standardized national accounts series of the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory and is classified in accordance with the

economic time series in use at the UNCTAD secretariat. The series are based on official data published by the Israel Carthal Bureau of Statistics and exclude East Jerusalem.

(c) "The tourism sector and related services in the Palestinian territory under Israeli occupation" (UNCTAD/RDP/SEU/7). This in-depth study constitutes the first comprehensive investigation to date of the relatively neglected sector of tourism and related services in the occupied Palestinian territory of the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) and Gaza Strip. It draws on a field survey conducted in 1990/1991 and on various sources of statistical and qualitative information. It consists of five chapters examining the Palestinian tourism sector before 1967, the natural endowment and socio-cultural heritage of the occupied Palestinian territory; major factors affecting the Palestinian tourism sector since 1967, in particular the impact of Israeli policy measures; the economic role of the Palestinian tourism sector between 1967 and 1990, including the structure and performance of Palestinian tourism branches during the period; and immediate needs and prospects for reviving the tourism sector in the occupied Palestinian territory.

38. The UNCTAD secretariat has continued to cooperate with the UNCTAD/GATT International Trade Centre (ITC) with a view to finalizing the project document for the establishment of a marketing centre in the occupied territory for Palestinian agricultural goods. Meanwhile, consultations are also under way with ITC, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and UNDP for fielding a mission of experts to prepare a feasibility study for the establishment of a marketing centre for Palestinian industrial goods.

5. United Nations Development Programme

Programme delivery

39. After the total interruption of field work during the war in the Persian Gulf, activities resumed at the same fast pace observed in 1990. Consequently, the 1991 project expenditures are expected to reach a level close to that of 1990, namely, $11 million.

Financial situation

40. The core resources of the Programme have been provided by the Governing Council through allocations from special programme resources. These allocations are the following:

		Millions of United States dollars
Second cycle	(1980-1981)	3.5
Third cycle	(1982-1986)	10.0
Fourth cycle	(1987-1991)	12.0
Fifth cycle	(1992-1996)	15.0

41. Since the inception of the Programme, complementary resources have been provided by Italy ($8.7 million), Japan ($5 million), the Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organizations (AGFUND) ($1 million), the United States of America ($1 million), Jordan ($457,000), Canada ($400,000), Greece ($80,000) and Tunisia ($48,500).

42. These non-core resources have been provided under funds-in-trust or management service agreements.

43. The Administrator wishes to express his appreciation for the growing financial support enjoyed by the Programme.

Project highlights

(a) Income-generation

44. In the agriculture sector, new irrigation channels are being completed in the El-Duyuk area (West Bank), benefiting some 200 farmers, while modern irrigation equipment is now being distributed to farmers of the Gaza Strip under a project that is to benefit 1,000 farmers.

45. In Jericho, a honey-processing plant was installed, thereby completing a project that has provided 200 bee swarms and hives, medicines, training and technical support to nearly 300 beekeepers of both the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

46. In Nablus, construction of a marketing centre and industrial zone is nearing completion. Consisting of three large buildings, it will house 87 shops and workshops for light industries as well as a refrigerated storage room of 500 cubic metres for agricultural products. Approximately 300 business people will benefit from these new and modern installations.

47. The Business Development Centre is continuing its training activities in the fields of management, feasibility studies and marketing. The Centre will soon start its lending operations and work on the most promising requests for financial support is now being finalized.

48. In Gaza, the construction of a packing and grading facility for fruits and vegetables has started. Its completion is expected by the end of 1991. It will handle seven to eight tons of non-citrus fruits and vegetables per day per shift.

49. The manufacturing of the equipment for the citrus-processing plant to be installed in the Gaza Strip is progressing. The plant, which will have a capacity of 20 tons per hour and will thus be able to process one third of Gaza's citrus production, should be operational by the end of 1992.

(b) Social sectors

50. The construction of four new schools was completed in 1991. Two are in Nablus, one is in Hebron and the fourth is in the Gaza Strip. Three others are under way in the West Bank. In addition, new laboratories are being constructed and will be finalized before the end of the year at the Arab Medical College in Ramallah.

51. In the health field, rapid progress is being made on the construction of a new wing for the Hebron Hospital. It is expected to be completed by April 1992.

(c) Infrastructure

52. Water supply schemes were finalized in 14 villages of the West Bank. They consisted of the improvement of wells, the construction of pumping stations, the building of water reservoirs and the installation of distribution networks and house connections. Over 80,000 Palestinians are benefiting from these various schemes.

53. In the energy field, by installing electricity generators in eight villages of the West Bank and training local villagers in their use, maintenance and repair, thus ensuring an independent and reliable supply of energy, UNDP helped improve significantly the living and working conditions of some 45,000 Palestinians.

54. In the Gaza Strip, work is being finalized on the sewage collections, treatment and disposal systems in both the Jabaliya refugee camp and the city of Gaza. An operation and maintenance project has also been started with the purpose of giving full training to the technical staff of the Jabaliya village council and the Gaza municipality in order to ensure the smooth running of the system after the end of UNDP assistance.

6. United Nations Environment Programme

55. At its sixteenth session in May 1991, the Governing Council of UNEP considered the report prepared by the Executive Director on the environmental situation in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories (UNEP/GC.16/5).

56. The Council also adopted decision 16/13 in which it, inter alia, requested the Executive Director, pending the achievement by the United Nations of a political solution to the question of the occupied territories, to take the actions and measures capable of halting environmental deterioration in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories and to provide the necessary assistance for protecting the natural resources in the area and for securing harmonious living conditions for the entire population.

57. The Council also requested the Executive Director to take all necessary measures to complete the database of information about the environmental situation in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories.

58. UNEP has started consultations with the PLO through their representatives at Nairobi regarding the implementation of the provisions of the Governing Council decisions. The Executive Director of UNEP will report on this matter to the Governing Council, as requested, at its seventeenth session, in 1993.

7. United Nations Population Fund

59. In the past, UNFPA has supported two types of activity, fellowships and primary health care research. Under its fellowship programme UNFPA allocated $230,780 (1986-1990) to support six fellowships for post-graduate studies in demography and related topics. This training component was part of the UNDP-financed programme designed to enhance the educational level of faculty staff for teaching at the Bir Zeit and Al-Najah Universities in the occupied territory.

60. As regards primary health care research in the West Bank and Gaza, UNFPA allocated $91,035 in the period 1987-1988 to support maternal and child health research and training activities at the WHO primary health care research centres. The long-term objectives of the project were to strengthen the capacity of the health services of the West Bank and Gaza to conduct health systems research at the primary and first referral levels, and to support research projects specifically relating to maternal and child health.

61. More recently, UNFPA has been requested by UNRWA to assist the Palestinian non-governmental organizations involved in providing expanded maternal health services in the West Bank and Gaza, and providing a level of care for women at high risk of complications to avoid maternal and perinatal morbidity and mortality. The immediate objectives to be fulfilled by 1995 are: (a) to have increased coverage of prenatal and postnatal care; (b) to have increased provision of hospital delivery for high-risk women; (c) to have conducted research and baseline studies essential to evaluation and planning of maternal/reproductive health care and the provision of family planning services; and (d) to have contributed to families' understanding of the need for and benefit of birth spacing related to maternal and reproductive care.

8. United Nations Relief and Works Agency

Introduction

62. In 1992, UNRWA is continuing to provide education, health, relief and social services and other humanitarian assistance to more than 2.5 million Palestine refugees in its five fields of operation, namely Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In addition, emergency measures are being carried out in Lebanon and the West Bank and Gaza Strip. A full account of UNRWA's activities can be found in the reports of the Commissioner-General to the General Assembly. 1/

63. The following is a brief summary of the Agency's present activities. An indication of the level of UNRWA's assistance to the Palestine refugees is provided by the budget figures. In the biennium 1992-1993, UNRWA's regular budget is approximately $572 million. The emergency measures in Lebanon and the occupied territory are planned to continue at a cost of $40 million. In addition to the regular and emergency budgets, about $40 million has been pledged or received since 1988 on the expanded programme of assistance referred to in paragraph 72 below. UNRWA employs approximately 18,500 staff, the vast majority of whom are themselves Palestine refugees, and is thus one of the largest employers in the Middle East.

Education

64. The objective of the Agency's education programme is to provide, within the framework of the host countries' prescribed school curricula, general education at the elementary and preparatory levels, teacher and higher education, and vocational and technical education for Palestine refugees, in accordance with their educational needs, identity and cultural heritage. The programme operates with technical assistance from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). In the 1991/1992 school year, the Agency has more than 374,000 pupils enrolled in 636 schools staffed by almost 11,000 teachers and is providing training for more than 5,200 vocational and teacher trainees in its eight training centres. Schools and training centres in the occupied territory are presently open but, throughout the period of the intifadah, education has been severely disrupted by strikes, curfews, disturbances and closure orders imposed by the Israeli authorities. After many years of disruption, most schools in Lebanon are now operating relatively normally.

Health

65. The UNRWA health programme comprises medical care and health protection and promotion delivered through 116 health centres and points, environmental health services in camps and distribution of food supplements to vulnerable groups. The Agency's health protection and promotion activities focus particularly upon disease control and maternal and child health care. Mental health projects have been started in the West Bank and Gaza. Medical care includes, inter alia, dental treatment. A physiotherapy programme is being

run in conjunction with UNICEF in six clinics in Gaza and five in the West Bank. The programme operates with technical assistance from the World Health Organization (WHO). The continuation of the intifadah and countermeasures employed by the Israeli authorities have had their effect upon UNRWA health services in the occupied territory. The Agency has had to give increased priority to emergency and casualty care provided in the camps, while at the same time maintaining its regular health activities in all areas in spite of interruptions caused by curfews, strikes, disturbances and the declaration of certain areas as closed military zones.

66. Besides continuing these services, the UNRWA health programme is focusing on the implementation of a number of new strategies in 1992, including family planning in the context of maternal health, reduction of doctor/patient ratios in health centres to a manageable level and the creation of consultative mechanisms to enable Palestinians to express their priorities in health care. The Agency's highest priority in respect of external funding will, however, be given to environmental health and, in particular, to planning and first-stage implementation of master plans for sewage disposal and safe water supply in the occupied territory and Lebanon. The Agency is also continuing with its project for constructing, equipping and commissioning a 232-bed hospital in Gaza at a cost of $35 million, $20 million of which represents capital costs and $15 million operating costs for the first three years.

Relief and social services

67. The relief and social services programme provides support to the Palestine refugees ("special hardship cases") and facilitates self-reliance. The programme consists of assistance to special hardship cases, social case work, self-support grants and related skill training, women's programmes, rehabilitation of the disabled and assistance to refugees in emergency situations.

68. These activities are continuing in 1992. In view of the continuing deterioration of the socio-economic situation in the UNRWA area of operations, the number of special hardship cases will be increased Agency-wide by approximately 5 per cent, to more than 170,000. Emphasis is being placed on setting up small group enterprises to provide employment, especially for women from special hardship families and the disabled. The community-based rehabilitation programme for the disabled is continuing and a review of its development to date will be the basis of a joint UNRWA-non-governmental organization discussion of future strategy in May 1992. In the occupied territory, projects are being developed aiming at the vocational rehabilitation of the disabled, in particular former bread-winners injured during the intifadah.

Extraordinary measures

69. In response to the additional needs created by the intifadah and the Israeli response, UNRWA introduced a programme of extraordinary measures, which, beginning in early 1988, have been extended through 1989, 1990, 1991

and 1992. The large number of casualties resulting from the intifadah has led to a considerable expansion of the emergency medical programme. These measures are continuing in 1992, with five clinics open 24 hours a day and the remainder open in two shifts in Gaza, while 11 clinics run double shifts in the West Bank. Additional medical supplies and equipment, including 16 ambulances for the evacuation of casualties, have been purchased and the payment of hospital costs and subsidies has been increased.

70. Welfare services have been expanded to assist the families of those killed, disabled or detained and to cope with the far-reaching socio-economic effects of the intifadah. Additional food is being provided to needy people in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and needy families have received cash grants. An important element of the Agency's extraordinary measures in the occupied territory is the programme of general assistance and protection. The major component of this programme is the placing of 12 international staff members in the West Bank and 9 in the Gaza Strip as refugee affairs officers. These staff members facilitate Agency operation in the difficult prevailing circumstances and assist the refugee population in their day-to-day life. The refugee affairs officers help by their presence to lower tensions, especially during confrontations with the security forces, and to prevent maltreatment of the refugees, especially vulnerable groups such as women and children.

71. The situation prevailing in Lebanon has required the Agency to carry out programmes of emergency and extraordinary measures for a number of years. In 1992, these include, inter alia, distribution of foodstuffs, cash assistance to the most needy and assistance to displaced persons.

Expanded programme of assistance

72. In 1988, UNRWA launched an expanded programme of assistance consisting of approximately 200 projects to improve living conditions and infrastructure in the camps in the occupied territory. A target working figure of $40 million had been received or pledged by March 1992. A high priority in the expanded programme of assistance is to ensure that refugees living in the 27 camps of the West Bank and Gaza Strip have decent shelter and a sanitary environment. Accordingly, substantial efforts are being made in repairing and constructing refugee shelters and in upgrading the standard of rehabilitation. The Agency will also continue to improve camp infrastructure and primary health care facilities, including construction and equipment of additional health centres, internal sewage systems and integration of camp water and sewage schemes into municipal and regional systems. It has recently been decided to extend the scope of the expanded programme of assistance to cover not only the occupied territory but also the Agency's other three fields. Major related projects currently under way include shelter rehabilitation schemes and construction of sewage networks in refugee camps in the West Bank and Gaza.

73. In the aftermath of the war in the Persian Gulf, the socio-economic situation in the occupied territory, already serious after more than three years of intifadah and Israeli countermeasures, became critical. As part of its efforts to relieve unemployment and assist the stagnant economy, UNRWA is

implementing a new income-generating and job-creation scheme. Priority is being given to new or expanded enterprises that use labour-intensive methods of production. Individuals as well as cooperatives, partnerships and other types of groups are eligible to apply for loans. In Gaza, loans totalling more than $200,000 have already been granted and loans are beginning to be made in the West Bank.

9. World Food Programme

74. The WFP project, "Assistance to the Palestinian people", with a total WFP cost of $871,900, has provided food aid and cash (for the purchase of local food) to assist Palestinian people in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The assistance was channelled through local institutions to hospital patients, orphanages and destitute families. Distribution of WFP commodities started in mid-September 1991 and terminated by the end of March 1992.

75. In order to sustain assistance, particularly to the most needy, WFP on 29 January 1992 transmitted to the Civil Administration (Israeli authorities) a note outlining its intention to continue assistance to targeted beneficiaries. To date, WFP has not received an official response from the Israeli authorities. The note proposes the extension of the feeding project, specifically to generate employment in local institutions and to provide food to hospital patients and orphans.

B. Specialized agencies

1. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

76. At its twenty-fifth session, in November 1989, the FAO Conference requested the Director-General to "send a mission to study and evaluate the situation of the agricultural sector in the occupied Palestinian territory, taking into consideration the conditions of the farmers under the existing occupation policies and practices, and to prepare a report comprising possible technical interventions to be executed by FAO". In addition, the Conference requested the Director-General to organize a symposium on the Palestinian agricultural sector and to include the occupied Palestinian territory in future FAO programmes and activities.

77. The Symposium on the Palestinian Agricultural Sector took place at Rome from 9 to 11 October 1991. It was attended by 15 consultants and experts selected from the occupied Palestinian territories in the West Bank and Gaza in their personal technical capacity and by representatives from the United Nations organizations (the Division for Palestinian Rights of the Office for Political and General Assembly Affairs and Secretariat Services; UNDP; UNCTAD; ITC; the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD); WFP; UNRWA; and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA); the League of Arab States, the "Al-Quds" Open University and the PLO.

78. Papers were presented on the following three subjects, leading to constructive discussions on identifying measures to improve agricultural development in the occupied Palestinian territories:

(a) The present situation of the agricultural sector in the occupied Palestinian territories;

(b) Present agricultural policies and their impact on agricultural development in the occupied Palestinian territories;

(c) Institutional support to agricultural development in the occupied Palestinian territories.

79. The recommendations of the symposium included the urgent need for a long-term plan for water development and conservation, studies on land and soil conservation, studies on dry-land farming, regulation of fertilizers and other chemicals, seeds and seedling production, national institutions for agricultural services, development of livestock, national institutions for agricultural data and assistance in the marketing of produce.

80. A mission to the occupied Palestinian territories was fielded from 23 August to 6 September 1991. It was led by Mr. Declan Walton, former Deputy Director-General of FAO, and also comprised Mr. Adel Cortas, Assistant to the Assistant Director-General, Economic and Social Policy Department, and Mr. Rene Branckaert, Animal Production Officer, Animal Production and Health Division, FAO.

81. The 26th FAO Conference, held in November 1991, endorsed the approach to technical assistance recommended by the mission and attached particular attention to action in the following areas: preparation of a comprehensive strategy as well as programmes and projects to ensure the sustainability of irrigated farming; recommendations for the future of citrus production in Gaza in the light of increasing water salinity and decreasing water availability for agriculture; preparation of a comprehensive study on the development of agricultural institutions, particularly for agricultural planning, credit and marketing; preparation of detailed studies on the issues highlighted by the mission with regard to pests and diseases, soil erosion, use of agricultural by-products for livestock feed, maintenance and repair of pumps and farm equipment, and development of rangelands. The problems of environmental degradation reported by the mission were considered to deserve special attention.

82. The Conference requested the Director-General to bring the recommendations of the mission and the conclusions of the Conference to the attention of all potential donors who might be interested in providing support for the Palestinian agricultural sector, either through FAO or directly under their own programmes. In addition, the Conference requested the Director-General to approach UNDP and other possible multilateral and bilateral donors for extrabudgetary support that might be required for specific projects formulated in the course of further work.

83. In order to fulfil the above-mentioned recommendations of the 26th FAO Conference, negotiations are under way with the ESCWA/FAO Joint Agriculture Division at Amman and the UNDP Office at Jerusalem for organizing a new joint FAO/UNDP identification/formulation mission during 1992. The objective of the mission is the formulation of an umbrella technical assistance project for presentation to potential donors. Furthermore, contacts are being made with all potential donors, multilateral funding agencies, regional development banks and funds, to identify and formulate agricultural investment projects for the occupied territories. All programme activities will be planned and implemented in cooperation with the UNDP Office at Jerusalem.

2. General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

84. With regard to the matters raised in General Assembly resolution 44/235, GATT wishes to draw attention to the following provisions of the Agreement.

85. Article V, concerning freedom of transit, is aimed at ensuring that goods in transit through the territories of contracting parties are not subject to delays and restrictions and are exempt from customs duties and other charges, except charges commensurate with administrative expenses or with the cost of services rendered. It should be noted, however, that these obligations apply only to traffic in transit to or from contracting parties. Any contracting party is, however, free to extend such benefits to countries other than contracting parties.

86. In respect of preferential treatment of exports, GATT wishes to point out that the decision of 28 November 1979 of the contracting parties on differential and more favourable treatment, reciprocity and fuller participation of developing countries (the so-called enabling clause) foresees that developed contracting parties to GATT may accord preferential tariff treatment - and in certain circumstances preferential treatment with respect to non-tariff measures - to products originating in developing countries in accordance with the generalized system of preferences. The selection of developing countries that would benefit from such preferences is a matter to be decided by each preference-granting Government.

3. International Fund for Agricultural Development

87. Article 2 of the Agreement establishing IFAD states that "the object of the fund shall be to mobilize additional resources to be made available on concessional terms for agricultural development in developing member States".

88. Section 1 (b), article 7, of the same Agreement lays down, inter alia that IFAD is to provide financing only to developing States that are members of IFAD.

89. On the eligibility of a State to become a member of IFAD, section 1 (a) of article 3 states that "membership of the fund shall be open to any State,

member of the United Nations or any of its specialized agencies, or of the International Atomic Energy Agency".

90. IFAD therefore has not provided any assistance to the Palestinian people.

4. International Labour Organisation

91. ILO is pursuing its efforts with a view to implementing and developing its technical assistance programme in the occupied Arab territories. Its current projects concern vocational training, trade union training and rehabilitation of handicapped persons.

92. Furthermore, the Director-General of ILO is preparing his annual report on the situation of the Arab workers of the occupied Arab territories, to be submitted to the forthcoming International Labour Conference in June 1992. Two missions to the region, one to the Arab countries and the other to Israel and the occupied Arab territories, have been sent recently with a view to collecting the latest available information on this subject.

5. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

93. In addition to UNESCO's programme of assistance to the occupied territories in the field of education and culture, UNESCO has provided in 1991 financial assistance of US$ 50,000 to Palestinian educational institutions affected by the crisis in the Persian Gulf under its special emergency assistance funds devoted to the crisis.

6. United Nations Industrial Development Organization

94. The Fourth General Conference of UNIDO in November 1991 adopted, inter alia, resolution GC.4/Res.7, in which it requested UNIDO to increase its technical assistance to the Palestinian people in close cooperation with the PLO.

95. Following the adoption of resolution GC.4/Res.7, a focal point and a team of staff members were created within UNIDO to monitor the development of the Palestinian industrial sector and to better develop and coordinate the activities related to technical assistance to the Palestinian people.

96. In February 1992, the focal point visited UNDP in Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza Strip, to initiate and establish a foundation for future collaboration with UNDP with respect to programme and project development and implementation. A joint review was undertaken on the progress made in preparation for a UNDP needs assessment report covering technical assistance to the Palestinian people. As a result of the mission and the review, areas have been identified where UNIDO assistance may be required in the framework of ongoing and future UNDP activities.

97. In view of the general stringency of financial resouces, UNIDO is planning to secure extrabudgetary resources to initiate new activities and to provide technical services to the UNDP programme for assistance to the Palestinian people in the industry sector at programme and project level.

Notes

1/ The report for the period 1 July 1990 to 30 June 1991 can be found in Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/46/13); the report for the period 1 July 1991 to 30 June 1992 will be presented to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session.

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COORDINATION QUESTIONS

International cooperation in the field of informatics

Report of the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

The present report has been prepared in response to resolution 1991/71 of the Economic and Social Council, in which the Council, having considered a follow-up report on the issue prepared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), recommended that more effective use be made of the existing coordinating mechanisms, with a view to regular consultations and coordination concerning informatics within the United Nations system; invited organizations to continue to reinforce their subprogrammes concerning international cooperation and regional strategies in informatics in developing countries; and requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its regular session of 1992 a report on the implementation of that resolution.

The present report contains the information provided by organizations and agencies of the United Nations system on their existing and planned activities in the area of international cooperation in the field of informatics, as well as on arrangements for cooperation and coordination of those activities with other organizations of the system.

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INTRODUCTION

1. At its second regular session of 1991, the Economic and Social Council discussed the question of international cooperation in the field of informatics on the basis of the follow-up report prepared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (E/1991/104). The discussion led to the adoption of resolution 1991/71, in which the Council, reaffirming the importance of the development of informatics as an instrument of international cooperation and endogenous development, recommended that more effective use be made of the existing coordinating mechanisms, with a view to regular consultations and coordination concerning informatics within the United Nations system, including consultations and coordination between UNESCO, through its Intergovernmental Informatics Programme (IIP), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO); invited the above-mentioned organizations to continue to reinforce their subprogrammes concerning international cooperation and regional strategies in informatics in developing countries, in particular the Informafrica project of UNESCO; and invited Member States to encourage and promote activities to expand the endogenous skills of their populations in the field of informatics and called upon donor countries to make voluntary contributions to the Intergovernmental Informatics Programme of UNESCO, with a view to strengthening its ability to provide appropriate support for projects in the field of informatics for the benefit of developing countries.

2. The Council, in resolution 1991/71, decided to keep the issue under review and to examine it at its regular session of 1992 and requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at that session a report on the implementation of resolution 1991/71. The present report responds to that request and describes actions undertaken by organizations and agencies of the United Nations system with a view to reinforcing international cooperation in the field of informatics and providing a basis for development and utilization of informatics in developing countries.

I. CURRENT AND PLANNED ACTIVITIES OF ORGANIZATIONS AND AGENCIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM IN THE FIELD OF INFORMATICS

3. The present section includes the information provided by organizations and agencies of the United Nations system on their existing and planned activities, as well as on arrangements for cooperation and coordination with other organizations in the field of informatics.

4. The Department of Economic and Social Development of the United Nations Secretariat, through its Statistics Division, provides considerable technical assistance to developing countries in the field of informatics in four ways: (a) implementation in countries of statistical development projects with substantial data-processing and informatics components; (b) implementation in countries of general data-processing and informatics projects that are

primarily, but not necessarily exclusively, concerned with statistical data processing; (c) provision of ad hoc assistance through advisory missions in data processing and informatics; and (d) implementation of global research, development, publications and training programmes.

5. Owing to the close interrelationship between development of data-processing and informatics applications and the development of statistical services world wide, national and international statistical services have historically been leaders in development of government data-processing capabilities. Advanced data-processing capabilities are indispensable for large-scale data-collection programmes such as population censuses, and accordingly the former Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat, whose functions are being continued by the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Development of the United Nations Secretariat, pioneered the introduction of such capabilities in a large number of developing countries, ranging from the smallest island countries of the Caribbean to the world's largest country, China. In recent years, the former Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat also pioneered the introduction and adaptation of microcomputer technologies for statistical and other government applications of every conceivable size; and the demand from countries for assistance and support, which has always been strong, continues to grow apace.

6. To meet countries' needs for assistance in data processing and informatics in statistical and related applications, the Statistics Division has four technical advisers in data processing and informatics who are devoted full time to substantive project management and country missions. They advise countries on a wide range of data-processing and informatics issues such as the establishment of national statistical databases; national strategies and policies for informatics; computer-based information systems including decision support systems, management information systems and expert systems; selection and acquisition of hardware and software; training programmes; and communications.

7. In 1989 and 1991 the former Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat also organized interregional workshops on population database technologies and in that same period issued several technical publications particularly emphasizing microcomputer applications, including Survey Data Processing: A Review of Issues and Procedures, National Household Survey Capability Programme; 1/ The Use of Microcomputers for Census Data Processing; 2/ Technical Papers presented at the Interregional Workshop on Population Data Base and Related Topics (Voorburg, Netherlands, 6-10 November 1989); 3/ Handbook for National Statistical Data Bases on Women and Development; 4/ A Model Survey of Computer Services; 5/ Manual on Population Census Data Processing Using Microcomputers; 6/ and Guide to Computerization of Information Systems in Criminal Justice. 7/

8. The Software and Support for Population Data Processing project funded by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in the former Statistical Office has for many years provided software and training for the editing and

tabulation of population data, for demograhic analysis of data and for population projections. The project supplies about 2,000 software packages per year to UNFPA-supported projects and institutions and conducts or assists a number of training workshops for software users.

9. The technical cooperation programme of the United Nations system in the field of statistical and related data-processing and informatics concerns is reviewed every two years by the Statistical Commission on the basis of a comprehensive report of the Secretary-General, and coordination issues are addressed by the Commission as appropriate. Inter-agency coordination of technical cooperation and of other aspects of the Statistics Division's programme in data processing and informatics is assured by the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) Subcommittee on Statistical Activities. The Subcommittee has established a Technical Working Group on Statistical Databases, through which the Statistics Division maintains and issues every two or three years the "Inventory of Statistical Databases" in the international statistical system.

10. The Department of Economic and Social Development of the United Nations Secretariat has been active in the field of informatics as it also relates to the early identification, analysis and monitoring of economic trends and social conditions at the country, region and world levels. These activities cover database and software development, global economic and social modelling and technical cooperation activities and have as one of their purposes the strengthening of the flow of information for the analysis of world economic developments between the United Nations and national research units. As part of the effort to monitor recent and prospective trends in the world economy, the Development Policy and Analysis Division of the Department of Economic and Social Development of the United Nations Secretariat assembles into computerized data banks selected series from regularly generated statistical databases issued by international agencies. These historical data and forecasts are further supplemented and standardized by the Division in order to provide the most current information available on key economic trends at the country, region and world levels. These analytical databases are disseminated in machine-readable form to Member States, international agencies and national research institutes in formats suitable for their own analytical and forecasting activities. In support of its analytical work, the Division develops personal-computer-based software for summarizing and analysing the large-scale databases it maintains; this software is also distributed to outside research units along with its analytical databases. In addition to supporting empirical studies of world economic development carried out by the Secretariat, information systems of the Division containing analytical data also support special studies and advisory missions carried out by Secretariat staff at the national level and are accessible by other departments from personal computers connected to the Division's local area network.

11. In the area of economic forecasting, the Department of Economic and Social Development maintains on the United Nations computer system the world econometric model of Project Link (LINK), which is used to project short- and medium-term trends in world production, international trade and financial

flows. The LINK system consists of a large number of individual country and regional models that have been designed to interact in a consistent way and to focus on the importance of international transmission mechanisms in determining national and regional levels of economic activity and the international flow of goods, services and capital. The Department of Economic and Social Development provides central supporting services for Project Link, including the estimation of econometric models for some developing countries and regions and the quarterly preparation of forecasts of world economic growth and international trade. LINK results are used by the Department of Economic and Social Development in the preparation of its annual World Economic Survey and its semi-annual World Economic Outlook. Other international organizations both participate in Project Link and make use of its forecasts and policy simulations in their main economic reports. National participants at the second and fourth quarter meetings of the Expert Group on the World Economic Outlook (Project Link) develop and maintain the national computer models on which the LINK world model is based, and prepare an initial forecast of trends in their national economy, which may be revised by the full LINK system in the light of assumptions made by other national modelling centres. Some of them are actively exploring the possibility of on-line access to the LINK model on the United Nations computer system from their national centres through advanced telecommunications facilities. LINK forecasts are extensively discussed in the world media and serve as input into policy formulation at the national level. National econometric model development projects based on Project Link are now under consideration and once implemented are expected to contribute to improving national economic policy formulation through their use as both a tool for the early identification of emerging problems and a means of introduction of more modern methods of economic analysis into policy discussions.

12. The Department of Economic and Social Development also maintains its Global Econometric Model (GEM) on the United Nations computer, which provides long-term macroeconomic projections on key trends in economic activity and international trade at the national level. Economic projections prepared with the model are usually discussed in the ACC Task Force on Long-term Development Objectives and its Technical Working Group and form the macroeconomic basis on which more sectoral projections are prepared by agencies. GEM is supported by an extensive computerized data bank containing national accounts, commodity trade statistics and demographic estimates and projections. These data and projection results based on the model are disseminated to other agencies and national research units.

13. A third large-scale global model is used by the Department of Economic and Social Development to study the relationship between economic development and environmental change. The United Nations Global Input-Output Model has recently been redesigned and updated by a team of economists at New York University. The model provides the Secretariat with a comprehensive framework for studying long-term environmental trends and their relationship to problems of economic development and structural change. Maintenance and operation of the model, which is implemented on a supercomputer installed at Cornell University and accessed through telecommunications facilities, is presently being transferred to the Department of Economic and Social Development.

14. Another feature of activities of the Department of Economic and Social Development in the area of informatics, carried out by the Population Division, is the provision of information on population trends and on new and emerging issues and their causes and consequences for all countries. As a by-product of those activities, an extensive body of computer software and databases has been developed and these materials are distributed throughout the world, particularly in the developing countries, through the Department's software development project. The following are the software packages that have been developed by the Department of Economic and Social Development:

(a) MORTPAK-LITE, the United Nations software package for demographic measurement;

(b) QFIVE, a microcomputer program for child mortality estimation;

(c) ABACUS, a population projection personal computer program;

(d) PDPM/PC population and development projection methods for microcomputers.

15. The databases of international comparable data maintained by the Department of Economic and Social Development include:

(a) World Population Prospects, 1990, available on magnetic tape;

(b) Demographic Indicators, 1990, available on IBM-compatible and Apple Macintosh diskettes;

(c) Sex and Age, 1990, available on IBM-compatible and Apple Macintosh diskettes;

(d) Interpolated National Populations, 1950-2000, available on IBM-compatible and Apple Macintosh diskettes;

(e) Interpolated National Populations by Sex and Age, 1950-2000: The 1990 Revision, available on IBM-compatible and Apple Macintosh diskettes;

(f) Urban and Rural Places, 1990, available on microcomputer diskettes for IBM-PC compatible computers in ASCII and Lotus 1-2-3 spreadsheet format, and for Apple Macintosh computers in ASCII (text) and Microsoft Excel formats;

(g) GRIPP: 1991 (Global Review and Inventory of Population Policies: 1991), available on diskette;

(h) PRED BANK (Population, Resources, the Environment and Development), available as files readable by Lotus 1-2-3, PFS Professional File, Reflex and Systat;

(i) International Migrant Stock (Lotus files containing data on the foreign-born or the foreign population enumerated by the most recent censuses of developing countries, classified by sex, age group and country of birth or country of nationality;

(j) World Contraceptive Use Data Diskettes.

16. Technical cooperation activities in population that have been undertaken by the Department of Economic and Social Development include a training programme in demography, and population and development, as well as evaluation and analysis of basic population data and population policy and development planning, of which the development of national capabilities has remained the main objective. In these activities, extensive use has been made of microcomputers for which a large number of software packages continue to be distributed through the Department's software development project.

17. The Department has some record of activities and projects in the area of informatics relating to science and technology, energy, water resources, mineral resources and other important sectors of national economies, in particular of developing countries. Thus, in the field of energy, training courses are presently being carried out in Ecuador on microcomputer applications for national energy planning, and specific software packages have been developed to that end. Projects for an electric power energy database are being developed in Egypt and other countries of the region. Another project related to the revision and expansion of national and subsectoral energy models is being carried out in Bangladesh. A number of projects relating to the management of integrated water resources and the elaboration of water master plans contain database and informatics components. A special software package has been developed for the evaluation of the quality of well water and groundwater, and is available to developing countries free of charge. A seminar for francophone African countries on the use of microcomputers in water resources planning and management will be held in Côte d'Ivoire in May 1993.

18. The activities of the United Nations Office at Vienna in the field of informatics are carried out within the Women's Information System (WIS), a computerized bibliographic database and software application developed and managed by the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs. WIS is an application of a programme designed by UNESCO and can be used on any IBM-compatible personal computer. An installation package is available along with user's manual and record guidelines. The software is trilingual (English/French/Spanish). The WIS database contains references for 3,500 United Nations system documents published since 1985. At present there are about 30 different users of WIS in all regions of the world, both in governmental offices for the advancement of women and non-governmental organizations, as well as in various United Nations organizations.

19. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has completed an in-depth study of its information systems

requirements at both headquarters (Vienna) and its area of operations in the Middle East. Pursuant to that study, the Agency is planning, if possible, to utilize the United Nations Secretariat's integrated management information system (IMIS) now in development. A working relationship will be established with the IMIS project, firstly, in order to determine the degree to which IMIS is suitable for UNRWA and, secondly, to prepare for future adaptation and use, if necessary.

20. At the same time, interim solutions to UNRWA's immediate needs will be sought through the improvement of the existing systems and the use both of systems available from other United Nations organizations and, where feasible, of commercial packages. With regard to utilization of the existing coordinating mechanisms, UNRWA maintains regular contacts with the Advisory Committee for the Coordination of Information Systems (ACCIS) in Geneva.

21. The United Nations University (UNU) launched its Microprocessors and Informatics Programme in 1983, as a response to the concern of developing countries facing the challenge of the new information technology. The main task of the Programme is to help the scientific and academic communities, particularly in developing countries, to strengthen their scientific and technical capabilities in this field by assisting them in initiating and improving relevant research and training in their home institutions.

22. In 1990-1995, the UNU Microprocessors and Informatics Programme will be focusing on three areas. (Most activities coordinated by the University are being carried out jointly with other universities and research institutions throughout the world, especially in the developing countries.) Those areas are:

(a) Design of real-time control systems, that is, integrated microprocessor-controlled instrumentation;

(b) Research and advanced teaching of informatics (computer science) in selected universities combined with outreach activities;

(c) Informatics for system design and management of complex man-made systems.

23. Within the first area of activities are research and training at the Microprocessor Laboratory in Trieste in cooperation with the International Centre for Theoretical Physics of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which are based on a grant to UNU from the Government of Italy. International colleges in Trieste and regional training courses in Latin America, Asia and Africa are being organized. UNU assistance is being provided to scientific instrumentation laboratories and microprocessor-support units at universities in Latin America and Africa.

24. The second part of the programme includes advanced academic teaching in informatics and front-end research on parallelism and database management systems at the University of Yaoundé in Cameroon, carried out by UNU in cooperation with the National Institute for Research on Informatics and

Automation in Paris. This joint project started in 1985 and is presently being extended to other universities in Western and Central Africa, thus contributing to the establishment of a regional research and training network in informatics. In 1992, the First African Conference on Research in Computer Science will be organized with the support of the Government of France. Common research projects will be established between African, Latin American and Indian universities with the support of research funds in France and Spain. Regional workshops in Africa will be organized by UNU in 1992 and 1993, in cooperation with universities in Ireland.

25. Within the third area of the UNU Microprocessors and Informatics Programme, the Information and Decision Systems (INDES) project is being carried out to promote research on the set of specific constraints prevailing in developing countries that prevent them from using existing advances in informatics in the design and management of complex man-made systems, for integration of their systems that are of vital importance for development with the global ones. Within the INDES project, two workshops were organized in 1990 and 1991 and were attended by specialists from both industrialized and developing countries, thereby initiating a number of studies, research and other activities to be launched at a later stage by UNU.

26. UNU is planning the following activities in the area of informatics for the period 1992-1993:

(a) One research and development demonstrator project, scheduled to begin in late spring 1992 and to be followed by further demonstrator projects in 1993;

(b) One three-month training course involving between 25 and 30 participants, to take place in the fourth quarter of 1992 (two such courses are planned for 1993);

(c) Three or four workshops to take place in 1992, and some in 1993;

(d) An international software technology symposium for 120 participants, to be convened in December 1992, and another similar forum in 1993;

(e) Several seminars, to be organized in developing countries in 1992 and 1993;

(f) A number of publications and scientific/technical reports on various aspects of informatics, to be produced in 1992 and 1993.

27. UNU has no regular formal coordination with other organizations of the United Nations system, except some consultations with UNESCO within the scope of its Intergovernmental Informatics Programme (IIP), and the exchange of information on respective programmes with the Informatics Unit of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). At the operational level continuous close cooperation between UNU and the International Atomic Energy

Agency (IAEA) in the field of micro-informatics has existed since 1983. Activities in some areas of informatics are being coordinated through ACCIS, and UNU adheres to such an arrangement.

28. In the view of UNU, a formal and regular, but at the same time flexible, coordinating mechanism that could contribute to the effectiveness and quality of the relevant programme activities in the field of informatics within the United Nations system would be desirable.

29. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), through its Pan-African Documentation and Information System (PADIS), delivers advisory services and other forms of technical assistance to African member States on information technology applications for development information and planning. Technical assistance workshops have included training in basic microcomputer software and in software for information management and computer-assisted publishing. Project documents have been submitted to bilateral and multilateral donors to fund operational activities to assist African States in the adoption of new forms of information technology. An ongoing project has established a computer-based communications network linking 12 African countries. There are plans to extend this to other countries of the region and to investigate alternate technologies, such as microsatellites.

30. The Economic Commission for Africa is in close cooperation with the Intergovernmental Informatics Programme of UNESCO.

31. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) has, since 1986, been engaged in activities under its statistics programme in the field of government data processing and computerization, in order to promote the use of informatics in the government sector of developing countries in the region. These activities are being planned and implemented with emphasis on the needs of the least developed and Pacific island developing countries.

32. The objectives of the statistics programme, as relevant to the field of informatics, are:

(a) To help the developing countries of the region analyse the major policy issues facing them and to suggest feasible measures for their solution;

(b) To assist countries in improving their skills in the formulation, implementation and management of development activities;

(c) To foster the utilization of modern information technology in the public sector in order to strengthen the ability, at both the central and subnational levels, to plan and manage economic and social development.

33. In order to meet the above objectives, the secretariat of ESCAP has initiated activities within the framework of technical cooperation in the form of consultancy and advisory services, training, seminars and workshops. The training activities are designed to expand the human resources skills of the national Governments in the field of informatics. These programmes are being

implemented as regular activities of the statistics division of ESCAP or as cooperative efforts with other divisions of the ESCAP secretariat, or in collaboration with other organizations and agencies of the United Nations system.

34. In government computerization, the courses of action of the ESCAP secretariat focus on the realization of the potential of information technology and the intensification of its use throughout government departments. The application of informatics in the public sector offers one of the most promising prospects in developing countries for improving the planning and management of development. Moreover, it is firmly believed that government computerization together with a national informatics policy will play a key role in the development of so-called information industries in the developing countries of the region.

35. The ongoing activities of ESCAP also include advisory and consultative services in system analysis and data processing. In 1991 ESCAP was engaged in such training activities as "ISI/ESCAP workshop on computer applications in health and demographic data analysis" and "DTCD/ESCAP workshop on computer-aided map production". In the area of government computerization ESCAP is planning the formulation, inter alia, of national informatics policy and strategy, human resources development and institution building. A newsletter on government information systems is in the process of finalization. The secretariat of ESCAP is cooperating with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in providing advisory and consultative services, along with relevant training, to member countries in the fields of data processing and computerized population information.

36. At the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) there exist a number of information services and databases covering various aspects of human settlements policies all over the world. The list of these services and databases includes: S.172. Training Unit; S.173. UNCHS (Habitat) Film Library; S.174. UNCHS (Habitat) Information Systems; S.175. UNCHS Documentation Service; S.316. Database of Periodical Titles (HSPER); S.317. Database on Ongoing Development Research Projects in the Field of Human Settlements (HABIRES); D.320. Human Settlements Literature Database (HABILIT); D.321. Human Settlements Statistical Database (HSDB.STAT); D.322. Human Settlements Training Institutions Database (HUSTI); D.323. Monograph and Periodical Article Database (HSLIB); D.324. UNCHS (Habitat) Trilingual Thesaurus in the Field of Human Settlements (HABIVOC); D.325. UNCHS (Habitat) Unpublished Reports and Films; and D.326. UNCHS Information Systems (Database) (HABIDOC).

37. All the information services and databases of the Centre are accessible to both United Nations system organizations and external users such as reciprocating agencies and/or depository libraries.

38. For the current biennium (1992-1993), the Centre has the following planned activities in the field of informatics:

(a) Database on textual and audiovisual materials;

(b) Database on national human settlements policies and instruments;

(c) Geographical information systems for land management;

(d) Computer software for selection of refuse collection vehicles in developing countries;

(e) Database on non-governmental organizations in the field of human settlements;

(f) Computerized construction sector database.

39. As regards cooperation and coordination between the Centre and other organizations and agencies of the United Nations system with respect to the above-mentioned activities, the Centre is working closely with the Advisory Committee for the Coordination of Information Systems (ACCIS) and has provided input for various publications and databases of ACCIS.

40. The Information System Section (ISS) was created at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in 1978 in response to the dramatic events taking place in South-East Asia. The Section provides UNHCR with expertise and resources for the identification, development and support of electronic data-processing applications. The main objective is to apply information technology to enhance operational, administrative and managerial effectiveness at headquarters and in field offices.

41. Demand for computer facilities increased rapidly over the two-year period 1990-1991, and in particular the global events of 1991 saw a dramatic increase in the use of personal computers in field operations. As a consequence, more than 70 per cent of ISS resources were absorbed by support of existing applications and equipment and the installation of new computers. The number of computer users increased from approximately 1,200 at the end of 1989 to 2,000 at the end of 1991; and there was an increase in the number of computer workstations, from 1,000 to 1,700, over the same period, along with an increasing demand for personal computers (both desktops and laptops). The installed base of personal computers increased from 700 to more than 1,500.

42. There has been increasing use made of personal computers by all levels of staff for word processing, spreadsheets, presentation graphics, and database applications. Personal computers are widely used in the field in refugee management systems, inter alia, for refugee registration, individual case monitoring, appeals tracking, family tracing and reunification, assistance tracking, education monitoring, repatriation, resettlement, integration and protection. Personal computers are also used in field management systems, inter alia, for financial management, project management, personnel management, procurement, materials tracking and administration. Extensive use was made of personal computers during the emergency situation in Iraq, the Kassala repatriation in the Sudan and the South Africa repatriation exercise.

43. At UNHCR headquarters progress was made on large development projects, the Personnel Project and Financial Management Information System (FMIS). The Personnel suite of applications was completed at the end of 1991. Further elements of the FMIS project were developed and implemented in both the field and at headquarters (HQ). Within FMIS/HQ a new administrative budget preparation system was installed. FMIS/Field systems were implemented for project management and monitoring, partner recording and administrative budget preparation. Each field system provided for electronic data interchange to headquarters. Major enhancements to the field office accounting system were also provided.

44. Two further legal databases were established at headquarters: a legislation database and an international instruments database. A personal computer package was selected for the distribution of textual databases to the field offices and a pilot database was set up in South-East Asia.

45. Substantive initiatives approved during 1991 and currently under way include a headquarters-wide local area network (LAN), an improved global electronic mail (e-mail) facility and a commitment by UNHCR to the United Nations project on the integrated management of information systems (IMIS). LAN will provide UNHCR with a cost-effective platform for developing future applications and permit a rationalization of technologies. The first phase of LAN, which comprises connecting all existing personal computers in headquarters, was scheduled for completion in April 1992. The global e-mail system will offer significant reductions in telecommunication costs through a network of land, satellite and radio communication facilities. The adoption of industry standard technology will permit UNHCR to communicate with all other organizations and agencies that have also adopted industry standards.

46. During the biennium 1990-1991, UNHCR continued to express its commitment to the concept of sharing United Nations-wide computer applications and facilities. In 1990 it was agreed that UNHCR would utilize, wherever possible, those applications being developed by the United Nations Secretariat under the IMIS umbrella. To this end, a full-time IMIS coordinator was established in 1991.

47. UNHCR does not have a formal long-term technical strategy, owing in part to the lack of a long-term development plan. Twelve-month plans have been agreed to, and the Organization is moving towards a flexible three-year plan. The short-term technical strategy includes, inter alia:

(a) Rationalization of current technologies (hardware and software);

(b) Improvement of the use of personal computer technology at headquarters and in the field;

(c) Phasing out of Wang technology during 1992;

(d) Standardization on CUA-compliant personal computer software for consistent user interface across applications;

(e) Movement towards open systems and industry standards, for example.

48. Technical assistance of the International Trade Centre (ITC) of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development/General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (UNCTAD/GATT) to developing countries regarding applications of Electronic Data Processing (EDP) was initiated in the late 1970s and has grown rapidly since 1984, with the availability of microcomputers at relatively low cost in most developing countries. The EDP unit established at the Centre in 1984 assumes the responsibility of maintaining and developing all computer applications and performs the technical supervision of all EDP activities, including EDP input into its activities of technical cooperation, which counts over 60 projects at the national, regional and interregional levels.

49. ITC has developed its expertise regarding the development of specialized applications in the field of informatics and telematics through its own experience, the know-how of EDP consultants and cooperation activities with partner institutions, notably ACCIS, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the European Economic Community (EEC), ESCAP, the International Computing Centre (ICC), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), UNCTAD, UNESCO and the World Bank.

50. In many cases, it was necessary to secure a minimum of computer literacy in beneficiary countries, through basic training of operators and programmers, in parallel with the acquisition and installation of microcomputer hardware and standard software packages (for example, DisplayWrite, WordPerfect, Works, Lotus 1-2-3, DBase, Harvard Graphics). Specific applications have been developed for improving the efficiency of particular functions of trade promotion, using standard software packages or compiled programs, notably in the following areas:

(a) Statistical analyses, that is, use of Lotus 1-2-3 with macro-instructions, DBase/Clipper programs for specific analyses, SAS applications and C language programs for advanced applications. These programs facilitate the processing of COMTRADE statistics supplied on request by ITC;

(b) Bibliographic references, that is, use of the CDS/ISIS software of UNESCO or DBase/Clipper programs, for managing library indexes and catalogues and similar databases;

(c) Company registers: a standard format, COMREG, was designed in 1991 for easier data interchange and matching of importers/exporters. Various programs have been developed based on this format using DBase/Clipper or C language;

(d) Telematic applications: access to commercial on-line databases and to the electronic bulletin board of ITC (hosted by ICC) is developed with standard telecommunication software (for example, Mirror, Procomm, Crosstalk,

Works II) or special programs (for example, PCWS of ICC, FTTERM of IBM), with various manuals on database selection and search strategies.

51. The above applications have been introduced so far in over 40 developing countries through national projects of technical cooperation. Important efforts for standardizing those applications have been deployed with a view to facilitating the dissemination of compatible programs and the exchange of data based on common formats, notably through regional projects (for example, PTA, CEAO, ECOWAS and ECCAS in Africa; TISNET in Asia; CARTIS in the Caribbean region; and RELIC in Latin America).

52. A package (TRAINS) including information on trade control measures, trade statistics at tariff level, importers profiles and references to published market research has been developed with a retrieval software in cooperation with UNCTAD.

53. Various EDP applications have been integrated into some organizations of developing countries making use of minicomputers or personal computer networks linked to international telecommunication services. For example, trade promotion centres have been linked up to their national branches and overseas trade offices (OTONET networks) in Ecuador, the Philippines, Thailand and Tunisia.

54. While the development and dissemination of ready-made programs will be continuing for the standard applications required in many developing countries, ITC will have to expand its technical assistance in the form of consultancy and training for the introduction and integration of new technologies, including hardware, software and telecommunication systems. A number of research and development activities will be necessary for the purpose of designing and testing new EDP applications and to assess their conditions of implementation within the context of countries with different levels of development.

55. The development of trade information networks, inter alia, between chambers of commerce, members of regional economic groups and member companies of international trade associations will require sustained efforts of standardization and cooperation with partner organizations for securing the necessary system compatibility and data interchangeability. Wider cooperation will also be required with trade information sources - publishers, on-line database hosts and suppliers of data on magnetic tapes, diskettes and compact disks read only memory (CD Roms) - in order to facilitate their access from developing countries through appropriate economic channels, with possible conversions and adaptations by ITC. The integration of computerized trade information applications into wider systems/networks often implies important investments in the developing countries and will continue to require high-level expertise and exchanges of experience.

56. The introduction of new EDP technologies opens new prospects for reducing the information gap of developing countries. However, the role of ITC is not limited to its technological features, for ITC aims at developing efficient

trade information services and networks using appropriate tools in a cost-effective way. In order for ITC to achieve this goal, substantial efforts have to be pursued in parallel with respect to the development of human resources, frequent adaptations to data sources and guidance at the management level, so as to meet the requirements of the business community in the developing countries.

57. The activities of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in the field of informatics for member States cover two areas: (a) provision of computerized information services and (b) development of information systems within projects designed to reinforce national capacities to manage social and labour programmes.

58. The first category includes the bibliographic database of the organization (LABORDOC), a bibliographic database on national social and labour legislation (NATLEX) and a full text database on international labour standards and their application (ILOLEX). These databases are available on line from ILO headquarters or commercial services, on diskette or on CD Rom. Other databases, on, for example, the structure, organization and activities of employment and labour inspection services, are under development.

59. In the second category are technical cooperation projects or project elements aimed at the computerization of employment services; of inspection services; of the collection, analysis and dissemination of labour statistics; and of the development of low-cost labour market information systems. Such projects may include the selection or development of software systems, identification of appropriate hardware, provision of training and publication of reports.

60. During the past few years, the increasing involvement of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in the area of informatics in developing countries has been effected through the provision of support to the information technology component of hundreds of FAO field projects throughout the world. That support has been given in such subject areas as analysis of user needs and subsequent development of computer-based applications and information systems, and formulation of mid- to long-term information technology strategies for ministries of agriculture as well as other government agencies.

61. On occasion, attempts are made by FAO to coordinate its field project activities with other ongoing, parallel development activities involving other organizations and agencies of the United Nations system. However, in the view of FAO, there is considerable room for improving this type of coordination, in particular in those cases where standardization of equipment, software, data or procedures is required in order to achieve effective automated systems.

62. The activities of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) are designed to place informatics at the service of development by following the priorities (which include human resources development, informatics networks, software development, research and

development, and informatics strategies and policies) set out in the Intergovernmental Informatics Programme (IIP) and the guidelines laid down in the regular action programme.

63. The aims of IIP are to strengthen international and regional cooperation with regard to exchanges of information, experience and know-how in the field of informatics and to contribute to the development of informatics infrastructures. This will be done in practice through the holding of the fourth session of the Intergovernmental Committee for IIP and the meetings of its Bureau. In addition, support will be given to the IIPNET network, which includes 400 institutions specializing in informatics, as well as to regional meetings of the focal points for IIP from member States, especially the least developed countries, in order to facilitate their participation in IIP activities.

64. Another sector of IIP activities concerns project implementation. IIP support was given to 20 projects during 1991. The projects concerned training of specialists and trainers in informatics, promotion and strengthening of information exchange and development of software production centres. IIP activities also cover the strengthening of existing informatics networks, including the Arab Scientific and Technical Information Network (ASTINET), the Regional Informatics Network for Africa (RINAF), the Regional Informatics Network for South-East Asia and the Pacific (RINSEAP) and the Regional Network for Cooperation among Institutions Specializing in Informatics (RCII).

65. These areas and priorities for action are the focus for cooperation between UNESCO (for all matters relating to training in and use of informatics), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) (for all matters relating to the establishment of links between countries and institutions) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) (for all matters relating to economic and industrial applications of informatics). In this context, the Informafrica programme and the Regional Informatics Network for Africa project, which were launched on the initiative of UNESCO in the framework of IIP, were submitted to ITU and UNIDO at the meeting of a consultative group on informatics for development held in November 1991 in Vienna.

66. Informafrica is the informatics component of the UNESCO Priority Africa programme and is intended to be an instrument of regional strategy. The aim of the project is to develop informatics and its use in educational systems. At present the project is focusing on the development of human resources through the training of software specialists, maintenance technicians, managers and trainers. Together with the development of informatics, special emphasis is being placed on maintenance. The setting up of maintenance training centres will be the starting-point for a genuine maintenance policy, which will be another area of cooperation between UNESCO and UNIDO.

67. The RINAF project launched in the framework of IIP is designed to establish the means for making possible during an initial period the exchange of scientific and technical information throughout the African continent.

This network will be divided into smaller networks and will be based on national and regional centres, which will establish links on the one hand between the national institutions of different African countries and on the other with international networks. ITU and UNIDO should be able to cooperate in this project, while the contribution by UNESCO will be the preparation of human resources for subsequent applications.

68. Provisions have been made in the Organization's work plan for 1992-1993 for the coordination of UNESCO informatics activities with those of other agencies of the United Nations system. The total budget for the informatics programme for 1992-1993, approved at the twenty-sixth session of the General Conference, is 60 per cent higher than that for 1990-1991. The work plan provides for cooperation with UNIDO, ITU and the United Nations University (UNU) in the form of training courses and workshops for informatics research workers and specialists, with a view to carrying out cooperative research projects on regional topics as a matter of priority. In addition, the United Nations agencies will be invited to coordination meetings, such as the sessions of the Intergovernmental Committee of IIP. Undertaken in this spirit, cooperation will continue and expand.

69. The existing and planned activities of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) with respect to technical cooperation with developing countries are primarily organized to provide assistance in the field of civil aviation, with activities related to informatics constituting a complementary tool. In the area of statistical collection of data, ICAO accepts such data in spreadsheet or ASCII format on either magnetic tape or diskettes. Provision of software to States to assist in their data-collection efforts is planned. Databases on air transport are also sold on magnetic media.

70. As regards information databases, these exist primarily in the field of air navigation with an Airport Characteristics Database available on line, although a Digest of Bilateral Air Transport Agreements is also maintained in magnetic format. Other information databases are provided on magnetic media on an ad hoc request basis, both to States and to other international organizations.

71. ICAO cooperates with other agencies of the United Nations system with regard to informatics through ACCIS.

72. The objective of informatics management in the World Health Organization (WHO) is to provide information support to WHO management, by means of the application of computer services for the automatic storage, processing, retrieval, presentation and transmission of information, in order to facilitate the implementation of the Organization's programme and to provide advisory services in this area to support health management in countries.

73. Microcomputers are the primary computing resource used at the offices of World Health Organization representatives in over 100 countries, at the six WHO regional offices and at headquarters in Geneva. However, at some offices mainframes and minicomputers are available. Four of the six WHO regional

offices have local area networks, and a fifth is scheduled to bring a network on line in 1992. The result will be an enhanced capacity to share resources, exchange information, utilize common information or corporate systems within the Organization and provide information that is requested by member States. Such systems, which have been developed and are being used for both internal and external purposes, are operational in the areas, inter alia, of bibliographic reference material, information on individuals and institutions collaborating with WHO and supplies management. Telecommunications links via computer have also been developed both in regional offices and headquarters.

74. Advisory support is provided to some member countries for the development or updating of various components of their national strategy for informatics support in the health sector. Annual training seminars are held for middle-level managers in national health services on the use of small-scale application of computer servers in the management of health care.

75. Cooperation on matters related to informatics, including health informatics, has been maintained with organizations and bodies of the United Nations system. The WHO Information Technology Office (ITO) in Geneva is the focal point for informatics coordination in the United Nations system, particularly with regard to the Advisory Committee for the Coordination of Information Systems (ACCIS) and the International Computing Centre (ICC) cooperative in Geneva.

76. With respect to the future, the WHO informatics management programme will continue to monitor technical developments in the computer field and advise management on the optimum use of the new technologies and on the development of software applications to support programmes. All users will be brought into local area networks at various WHO offices and information systems available therein will be expanded. ITO at Geneva has initiated a study on the future WHO environment for major computing applications that will be completed in 1992. Computer linkage between major offices will continue to be worked upon, with the aim of initiating information exchange between programmes and providing a global management information system. Training of staff in the new technologies will remain a major priority.

77. Advisory support to countries will continue and a number of new collaborating centres in the health informatics fields are expected to be established. Further training sessions for national health managers will be held. Participation in internal consultations relating to standards setting in this field will take place. A greater integration of telecommunications and informatics is envisaged as promising both efficiency in information distribution and cost reductions. Further work will be needed on linking all WHO offices world wide. The requirement to improve the on-line access to WHO computer-supported databases by member States is a high priority. WHO will continue to act as the independent technical forum for regional and international standards on data, format (for example, of health records), software and legislation related to health informatics.

78. The Universal Postal Union (UPU) has come out with the initiative of establishing an on-line database containing information on various aspects of the postal services that should be accessible to the postal administrations of all member countries. In addition, UPU is working towards the adoption of the Electronic Data Interchange for Administration, Commerce and Transport (EDIFACT) for the exchange of day-to-day operational information between postal administrations, and between postal administrations and the airline companies and customs authorities. In the establishment of the EDIFACT service, UPU will be guided by the relevant International Organization for Standardization (ISO) norms.

79. With particular reference to developing countries, the undertaking of a consultancy study aimed at covering all aspects of their needs in relation to the EDIFACT service is being planned by UPU during the second half of 1992. The study will:

(a) Examine already existing EDIFACT applications in developing countries;

(b) Establish which postal administrations are interested in and capable of joining the network at an early stage;

(c) Quantify, in terms of traffic levels and equipment needs, costs at the various levels at which postal administrations of developing countries could join the network, ranging from the level of a minimum basic application up to that of full integration;

(d) Establish the costs that would be incurred at different levels in terms, inter alia, of types of computer and other equipment needed, numbers of staff required, necessity for training printing of bar-coded labels and other ancillary equipment.

80. UPU is also planning to form a group or consortium of technically advanced nations to assist developing countries establish a system on the basis of BLT (Build, Lease and Transfer). The system would be installed and leased out to a requestee country and the lease money would be realized out of the postal dues owed by a developed country performing the service. After the settlement of all dues, the system would be fully transferred to the requestee country.

81. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) deploys continuous effort for harmonization, development and enhancement of telecommunications throughout the world, with particular emphasis on the requirements of developing countries. This includes the development of telecommunication networks in order to provide access to informatic systems and database centres all over the world.

82. To enhance the existing coordinating mechanisms, ITU and UNESCO have elaborated a draft agreement with the aim of ensuring better cooperation with regard to telecommunication programmes and projects including informatics. This agreement is now under process of finalization.

83. In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1991/71, ITU, UNESCO and UNIDO have been cooperating within the framework of the Consultative Group on Informatics Technology for Development (COGIT), which is sponsored by UNIDO, and had its last meeting in November 1991. The Group recommended consideration by the three organizations of a pilot project for one of the developing regions (see para. 98 below).

84. The World Climate Data and Monitoring Programme (WCDMP) of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) implements the following major projects that concern informatics: (a) Climate Computers (CLICOM), dealing with the collection, quality control and archiving of climate data; (b) Data Rescue (DARE), dealing with rescue of deteriorating climate manuscripts through the use of microfilming and advanced data management; and (c) Information Catalogue of Reference to Climate System Datasets from centres world wide (INFOCLIMA).

85. The extent of the first project, CLICOM, is attested by the installation of computer hardware and software in the Meteorological and Hydrological Services of 97 member States. Many countries have multiple installations with the use of CLICOM spreading to university communities and other scientific institutions.

86. CLICOM is actively supported by financial and technical contributions from a number of industrialized States, particularly the United States of America, France and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, via the WMO Technical Cooperation Programme, including UNDP projects. CLICOM makes it possible for many developing countries to have ready access to the full range of national climatic datasets of developed States and to more easily exchange climatic data internationally. A group of world-wide CLICOM experts has been formed to provide installation-related training, and the group will be aided by the continuing development of CLICOM area support centres.

87. The DARE project, combined with CLICOM, is aimed particularly at assisting developing countries in the management, preservation and use of their climatic data. This project is the continuation of the Data Bank Project started in 1979. It has been vitally supported by the Government of Belgium with the establishment, in Brussels, of the International Data Coordination Centre, which has coordinated the project through planning, training and microfiching, digitalization and inventorying of microfilming records. UNEP has financed the purchases of microfilming and reading equipment.

88. The INFOCLIMA Information Catalogue of Reference to Climate System Datasets contains references to more than 1,000 datasets from 280 data centres throughout the world. The catalogue is updated every two years, and a continual effort is under way to query contributors concerning changes in the status of their climatic databases. The World Climate Data and Monitoring Programme of WMO is in the process of producing a CLICOM-like digital version of a subset of the catalogue on a personal computer (PC)-Database that will allow member States with CLICOM PC systems to access information on line.

89. WMO cooperates closely with member States through its World Weather Watch (WWW) programme which provides observational data and products, that is, analyses, forecasts and other environmental information, to national meteorological centres. That programme coordinates activities on the gathering, production and distribution of vital meteorological information on a world-wide scale.

90. The WWW programme comprises the following three basic components: (a) the Global Observing System, (b) the Global Telecommunication System and (c) the Global Data-Processing System. This structure has been in place for over 25 years. The Global Observing System generates weather observations through some 9,500 stations on land, 7,000 ships at sea, 3,000 aircraft and a system of polar orbiting and geostationary satellites. The Global Data-Processing System, which provides weather analyses and forecasts to member States, consists of about 160 national centres, 29 regional specialized meteorological centres and 3 World Meteorological Centres. Some of those centres, in cooperation with ICAO, produce specialized information for civil aviation; others, in cooperation with IAEA, provide special products, inter alia, for meteorological support in case of accidental release of hazardous material. The Global Telecommunication System provides services, through the integrated network of 250 point-to-point circuits, satellite-based dissemination systems and radio broadcasts, for the rapid and reliable collection and exchange of the required observational data, meteorological analyses, forecasts and warnings between member countries.

91. WMO assists its members in planning and coordinating implementation of systems exploiting new opportunities in the informatics field by providing a framework of coordinating bodies, such as the WMO Commission for Basic Systems, working groups, expert meetings, consultant services, training and equipment support. It also works towards bridging the technological gap between countries. Suitable interfaces, transition arrangements and support are being developed within the WWW programme to ensure that those countries with limited resources and less sophisticated equipment can obtain the meteorological data and products that they require for their national economies.

92. In the last year the secretariat of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) has promoted the concept of software as an industry and assisted developing countries to promote that industry. The concept has been elaborated through several studies dealing with software development and applications for developing countries, the approach to software production in those countries, and guidelines for organizing software houses. Further work in this area would include the promotion of software links to industry for specific applications of relevance to developing countries.

93. Software technology is now being recognized as an important new sector deserving development in itself. The most important elements of informatics technology from UNIDO's point of view may include the following:

(a) Industrial software applications;

(b) Software as a small-scale industry;

(c) New production technologies for software;

(d) Standardization and legal aspects in both hardware and software;

(e) Monitoring development of software technology.

94. The key issue in the development of software products is a demand for computer applications.

95. In order to improve product quality and effectiveness in the small- and medium-scale industry sector, particular emphasis is being given to demonstration projects for that sector. Demonstration projects yielding tangible and measurable improvements in productivity in various sectors of the economy are of vital importance to opinion building among planners, economists and administrators in developing countries.

96. The implementation of this approach is being carried out through the Regional Network for Micro-electronics in the ECLAC Region, which has the support of 15 countries from that region. As part of the project, a training course for trainers in design of integrated circuits (ICs) was held at the International Centre for Theoretical Physics at Trieste in February 1991. Studies were completed for Argentina, Colombia, Cuba and Ecuador, while activities concentrating on legislation in informatics continued. Three technical publications on the development of policies and programmes in informatics in selected developing countries were published as were four country-level reviews on the potential and actual applications of informatics for manufacturing technology in small industry. One profile of microprocessor application centres/laboratories suitable to developing countries, one review of trends in software tools and their implications for software production and exports by developing countries, and two reviews of trends in the development of service industries related to informatics technology in developed and developing countries were carried out.

97. As regards assistance in technological cooperation at the enterprise level between developed and developing countries in micro-electronics and software, possible partners for a joint venture in software production between the United States and Trinidad and Tobago are to be identified and a detailed concept for microprocessor application centres for developing countries is to be elaborated. Seven studies on the subject have already been carried out. In addition, a project for the first phase of an assessment of the capacities and capabilities for the manufacture of telecommunications equipment in Africa, to be funded by the Government of Italy, was approved. A survey of telecommunications services and the telecommunications industry was also completed. A workshop for African and Arab country representatives from the telecommunications industry was held in New Delhi (India) from 3 to 12 September 1990 and a meeting on technological cooperation for the

development of the telecommunications industry in the region of Asia and the Pacific was held in Bangalore (India) from 9 to 13 December 1991. Reports of both meetings are available.

98. In an effort to coordinate the activities of organizations and professional groups active in the area of informatics technology for development, the UNIDO secretariat convenes biannual meetings of the Consultative Group on Informatics Technology for Development (COGIT). Those meetings bring together professionals from the field of informatics, identify possible areas of cooperation and consider a mechanism for keeping mutually informed and formulating joint programmes. The last such meeting of the Group was held from 26 to 28 November 1991. It recommended that international cooperation in the field of informatics development be encouraged among international organizations, in particular between UNIDO, UNESCO and ITU, in such areas as networking, skill building and software development centres. It also recommended for consideration by the three organizations a pilot project for one of the regions that would aim at studying the possibility of establishing a regional network using a multimedia approach for education as well as for upgrading industrial manpower in utilization of new technologies.

99. UNIDO's approaches to informatics have one feature in common: increased industrial efficiency at the enterprise level through the application of informatics technology. This is achieved through assistance at the national level, as well as through the promotion of regional cooperation involving close cooperation among developing countries and increased transfer of technology between industrialized and developing countries. The approach focuses on strengthening the application of informatics through the creation of an interface between research, development and production, thereby promoting a cooperative mechanism involving universities, industry and enterprises for developing designs and applications specific to integrated circuits (multichip). An integral part of that interface will be the establishment of informatics incubators, promoting services related to the informatics and information industries and the application of microprocessor control in such areas as energy conservation.

II. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

100. Informatics activities and programmes as described by the responding agencies and offices fall under one or the other of two main groupings of informatics projects, namely:

(a) Projects of a global nature implemented at headquarters of agencies of the United Nations system that, although mainly targeted at supporting their own headquarters' staff functions, and also available for the benefit of other agencies and governmental offices;

(b) Technical cooperation projects that are primarily concerned with, or contain a major component of, informatics, implemented on the national or regional level and designed to reinforce countries' capacities to manage specific substantive programmes.

101. The undertakings reported by the different agencies and organizations of the United Nations system reflect the diversity of the agencies' mandates and cover a broad range of informatics' wide spectrum. Those may be classified under the following general types:

(a) General research and development with potential applications in developing countries, including strategies and policies for informatics;

(b) Technology dissemination, inter alia, through training, seminars, workshops, advisory services, equipment acquisition, system installation and application of software development;

(c) Development of international databases and information systems in specific fields such as:

(i) Management systems;

(ii) Technical/scientific systems;

(iii) Bibliographic systems;

(iv) Statistical systems;

(d) Information networking and communications systems.

102. Established mechanisms exist for coordination of technical cooperation in statistical data processing and informatics in the Statistical Commission and ACC Subcommittee on Statistical Activities, and for statistical information systems in the Subcommittee's Technical Working Group on Statistical Databases. Applications in developing countries are an explicit ongoing concern of these mandates and coordination and collaboration in developing countries' applications could be reinforced.

103. Other mechanisms are available to facilitate access to United Nations information by Member States. For example, the Advisory Committee for the Coordination of Information Systems (ACCIS) was established by decision 1983/9 of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) to facilitate access by Member States to United Nations information and to promote the improvement of the information infrastructure within the United Nations system. Its mandate includes an advisory service to United Nations system organizations on proposals for the creation of new information systems, and for substantial modifications to existing ones, with a view to avoiding unnecessary duplication within the United Nations system. ACCIS promotes the use of common standards to enhance compatibility of information systems as well.

104. Various mechanisms also exist for inter-agency coordination of work on management information systems, bibliographic and other specialized technical systems, publications and communications systems within the framework of each implementing agency's mission (for example, libraries, engineering,

transnational corporations). However, there is no general framework for their overall coordination and systematic consideration of applications in developing countries.

105. Development of such a framework could be considered by the new Department of Economic and Social Development of the United Nations Secretariat, which is explicitly the United Nations system focal point for general research, policy and coordination issues affecting the developing countries and whose established responsibilities and programmes now cut across a wide range of informatics and data-processing concerns in a comprehensive way. Thus the Department of Economic and Social Development is in a unique position for assuming such a role of leadership in coordinating United Nations activities in informatics for development. This situation is further strengthened by the rich and varied experiences in computers and informatics already available in the Department of Economic and Social Development, primarily in the Statistics Division, which for a long time has been highly visible to many developing countries.

106. The development of an overall coordinating framework would require flexible arrangements for inter-agency consultations making maximum use of existing mechanisms. Regular (but at the same time flexible) coordinating arrangements that would contribute to the effectiveness and the quality of the United Nations system activities for developing countries are needed. The objectives of such arrangements would be:

(a) To identify problem areas in informatics suitable for tackling through coordination/cooperation among United Nations bodies for the benefit of developing countries (for example, when standardization in equipment, software, data or procedures is required);

(b) To propose some (common) informatics projects/programme activities on the national/regional level that would effectively foster the utilization of modern informatics technology for the countries' economic and social development.

Notes

1/ Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat (DP/UN/INT-81-041/1).

2/ Department of Technical Cooperation for Development, and Statistical Office, both of the United Nations Secretariat, working paper (UNFPA/INT-88-P09/1, 1989).

3/ Department of Technical Cooperation for Development of the United Nations Secretariat (INT-88-P07/1, 1990).

4/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.89.XVII.9.

Notes (continued)

5/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.91.XVII.12.

6/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.90.XVII.19.

7/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.92.XVII.6.